

THE HOUSTON DAILY POST.

BY THE
Houston Printing Company.

E. M. JOHNSTON, PRESIDENT.
G. J. PALMER, VICE-PRESIDENT.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

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"HUSTLING" FOR POPULATION.

Some of her Britannic majesty's subjects up in the dominion of Canada are setting up an excellent example in the matter of getting the attractions and resources of their country before the outside world.

The fact is noted in one of The Post's exchanges that "the Central Canada chamber of mines, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, is busily engaged in flooding the press of the United States, and presumably of other countries, with matter bearing on the material resources of Manitoba and Western Ontario. The matter they are sending out is intelligently prepared and will doubtless induce many people who are seeking homes and fortunes to turn their eyes in the direction of the great Northwest."

The object of all this advertising, as the exchange referred to, the Nashville American, remarks, is, of course, "to encourage immigration and the investment of capital in the Canadian gold fields and farm lands, and we point to it merely to emphasize the fact that progressive men and organizations are awake to their opportunities and determined to gain population and wealth if it is possible to gain them."

The Post also "points to it merely to emphasize the fact" that it is only by intelligent, persistent and liberal effort of this kind that communities nowadays are built up to population and wealth. What the Southern States need chiefly is more population to aid in developing their agricultural, mineral and industrial resources. More population means more activities, more business, more money expended more growth in all directions.

If Texas could maintain by private subscription, or public means, an immigration bureau that would "flood" the Northwest and the Middle States with literature relating to our magnificent advantages we could be possibly the third, or, at least, the fourth, State in the Union in population in 1910. We ought to have over 5,000,000 people here by that date. And we can have them, with all that such an increase in population would mean, if we work intelligently to that end. But even Texas must work for development and superior standing among the States if she desires such things.

UNCOVERING TAXABLE WEALTH.

If ever a tax system is devised and enforced by which all the property in a city, or any other populous community, properly subject to taxation is actually assessed at something like its real value and the taxes vigorously and impartially collected, we shall cease to hear much more about the "burden of taxation," so far as the weight of the tax rate is concerned.

Under such a system in vogue anywhere, today, it would be possible to cut the tax rate practically half in two and yet give to the public coffers more money for the purposes of government. The class of citizens would not feel indignant because another class was permitted to dodge taxation and all would probably pay their public dues more cheerfully because all were made to pay their just share.

It begins to look as if the taxing department in Greater New York were determined to bring about some such reform as this. The statement is made by the president of the tax department in that city that the assessments on personal property will be increased \$3,000,000 this year over last, while the rate in real estate assessment is to be about 70,000,000. That's a pretty good deal, isn't it? The assessed value of property, heretofore, or last year, was about \$1,500,000,000. It will be about \$1,800,000,000. That's an increase of \$300,000,000. Taxes might be reduced nearly a half lower than now, in fact, it is claimed that under the increased assessment this year the tax rate will be the lowest prevailing for thirty years past.

This increase, it must be remembered, too, is brought about simply by adding to the rolls lists of properties that have been dodging taxation. It is the result of inquiries into the actual wealth of New York's rich people who have been paying taxes on \$500,000 worth of personally while owning millions of stocks and bonds that are hid away in vaults. The inconsistency of seeing a man rated in the business world as worth \$500,000,000, while he is rated on the tax rolls as worth only \$1,000,000, has at last dawned on the taxing department.

This is the kind of searching reform that is needed in almost every locality—not an increase in the taxes on property, but the bringing into light of the unreturned property which is known to exist. Such reforms can be followed by lightening the general burden of taxation, or giving the public more money for the pressing needs of government.

WHERE RESPONSIBILITY RESTS.

Bishop Potter of New York City said the other day that the New York authorities had offered to "give him the heads," so to speak, of the police captains or police inspectors in whose districts the trouble originated which caused the outbreak of the anti-vice crusade in the big city recently. It was understood that this proposition from the higher authorities was a kind of "neve offering" from them to the indignant and aroused masses.

But the offer was declined, the bishop saying that he believed the captain did what the inspector told him to do, that the inspector only gave such orders as he had received from the chief of police and that the chief had carried out the wishes of the politicians who were over him. "Punishment of the men at the bottom," said the bishop, "will accomplish little. It is the political system of which they are the tools that must be reformed."

Bishop Potter indicates his sound sense and his thorough knowledge of the conditions of his city and of the methods of municipal government when he declines to fix the responsibility for broken laws, for corrupt practices, or evil-doing, under any kind of local government, upon the subordinate officers. His reasoning is worthy of attention by other communities than New York.

In most of our American municipalities there is a flagrant non-enforcement of the regulations against vice. In many of them it is freely carried out and generally understood that the vicious classes pay regular instalments of "bush money," or "peace money," and that these contributions never find their way to the public treasury. It is often a pure waste of time and energy for any good citizen to attempt to have these "prohibited classes" checked in their various occupations. Vice and infractions of the law are open and notorious, but the officers of the municipality forget their oaths of office, or else close their eyes, and the vicious continue to go unpunished.

But the subordinate officers are not to blame. Bishop Potter's idea is right, not to strike at the patrolman, or police officer, who connives at wrong-doing, but at the man or men behind and in control of the whole system. Does any sane citizen imagine for a moment that if the higher officials of any community want to purify a city, or a city government, the subordinates would dare to disobey instructions? Or that these same subordinates would dare become efficient and conscientious ministers of justice, purity and good government if they understood that such course would be unpopular with their bosses?

When a city government, in a word, is not what it ought to be, or the moral conditions in the city are not what they ought to be, it is the direct fault of the higher officials, "the man or men behind and in control of the whole vicious system," and it is a species of injustice to hold the little subordinates responsible—further than that they ought to be ashamed to sell themselves to such masters or to such a system.

A CONFESSION OF IMPOTENCY.

The Houston Post, in advocating a convention to formulate a new "unified" constitution, declares that "not a corporal's guard in Texas would recognize the honest law. Perhaps we don't know what a corporal's guard is, but many of the commercial organizations of the State have denounced that law as a refuge for the dishonest. The present constitution could undoubtedly be improved upon, but whether that betterment would be from the standpoint of the masses or the financial interests can hardly be foretold. Of one thing, however, we are certain—cashable interests would use every resource to secure provisions in their own interests, while the constitution is being framed, and at home and merely vote—Farm and Ranch. So long as the State government permits the lobbyists to hang around our lawmakers at Austin, and to use every fair and unfair influence legislation, and so long as the combined interests can exert a power over the legislature, a free and full expression of the will of the people, so long will the latter require a satisfactory assurance that sufficient safeguards will be provided before they enter with any enthusiasm the work of amending or changing the constitution. It is to eliminate objectionable and add desirable clauses, without endangering our features which they have no fear of changing—Reynolds Messenger.

This kind of reasoning is an insult to the intelligence of the people as well as to the integrity of the great majority of the people's representatives. But it is more than that—it is a confession of helplessness impotency in the body politic. It is childish talk. It means that Texas can not take a step forward without fear of being "kidnaped." It says to the world that our people are so weak and ignorant and venal that we can not attempt constitutional reforms. It means that the public can not elect a representative to the legislature or to a constitutional convention in whom it can repose any confidence, and that representative bodies are in danger of being bought up bodily and directed to the "financial" or "corporate" interests of the State.

If it does not mean all this, then what does it mean?

Have we actually reached a point in this State where we can not trust ourselves to self-government? Are the people less intelligent, less courageous and less free than they were in 1876, when the present constitution was adopted? Are we helplessly afraid to attempt anything in the way of constitutional making on our own account for fear we may be unhooded or corrupted?

Positively such reasoning is puerile, and a reflection upon our sense and honesty. It is a wonder that we continue to elect legislatures at all. It is astonishing that such things as constitutional amendments are tolerated at any time, for fear of some "flaw" in them or of bugs under them. It's a profound mystery that we ever trust ourselves out alone in the public highway!

The Post has more respect for and confidence in the people than these opponents of a new constitution manifest. It believes that the people can send men to a constitutional convention who will be above price and faithfully and intelligently represent their constituents. It believes that whatever of the old constitution the people want they will retain, and that if the new one does not suit them they will refuse to ratify it. To believe otherwise would be to despair of the future progress of Texas and to lose all faith in her people. And The Post has certainly not reached that point yet.

Five years ago the people of this Nation would have feared to simply increase the regular army in the constitutional way. Now they have elected a congress that is actually willing not only to see the army increased but to place the whole thing in the hands of the president. Times have changed rapidly in these days, and yet we are told that we need have no fear for the Republic.

Grover Cleveland could have talked with much greater facility on the best means of disrupting a party.

The Democrats from Europe indicate that the Washington government is still trying to buy more trouble in the shape of the Danish West Indies. Before we look for the Danes, the Danish islands might have been useful as a sailing or naval station, but now their acquisition would mean only an additional job lot of hurricanes, earthquakes and colonial paupers.

If Houston does not accomplish something of the ordinary very soon the public will be apt to conclude that all centuries look alike to us.

The Boston Globe thinks it ought to be a fine thing to have one's name appear prominently in the list of "heavy taxpayers." There are lots of good men every where whose names do not appear in such lists who would be willing to pay liberally for the destruction and would agree never to dodge the assessor or collector.

The Burleigh reportmentment bill now before the senate and will doubtless be promptly signed by him—Mr. Hanna offered no objection to it in the senate.

The Philadelphia North American thinks it must be somewhat humiliating for Senators Hanna and Fry to have to appear in court to answer for our suffering and to answer for our suffering.

If the streets are very muddy it would appear to most people that the raising of sand should not be stopped. Sand is sometimes better for muddy streets than chartered especially in rainy weather.

The packing house trust thinks the salt water is very dirty, and the salt water is very dirty, and the salt water is very dirty.

The packers' combine may be fresh at the beginning, but it will certainly get pretty heavy before it gets through with the salt water.

SOME WASHINGTON NOTES.

Washington—The gospel of the democratic cloak room took on something of a literary turn yesterday afternoon, when those two venerable statesmen from the Southwest—Slayden of Texas, and Cowherd of Missouri—came together and settled into comfortable chairs in front of the blazing hearth.

"One of the finest epitaphs I ever read was from the Wolfville stories, penned by Alfred Henry Lewis, who used to be here as a Washington correspondent," observed Mr. Slayden. "You remember when a cowboy was killed one morning and his colleague was requested to compose a few lines to the dead man's memory. He had to wait for a long while, finally giving up in disgust, then took his pencil and scribbled the somewhat inelegant but very forcible words: 'He did his damndest; angels could do no more.'"

"I claim credit for part of the fame that Al Lewis has gained as an author," rejoined Mr. Cowherd. "Al was a poor lawyer out in Kansas City, living from hand to mouth, and getting very few clients. He came out as a candidate for himself for the position of assistant prosecuting attorney for Jackson county. That was in 1885. We had a hard struggle over it, and finally I defeated him. But he turned his attention to treating newspaper writers as a candidate for mayor and his administration of the city's affairs, although he kindly let me alone. It established his reputation as a writer, which since then has grown much wider than the confines of Kansas City."

One man who sticks his hands deep down into his pockets and looks gloomy these days is Representative Sam Brown Cooper of Texas—that is, when he is deliberating on the prospects of Southern claims. Mr. Cooper was a member of the claims committee several years, and did a great deal of hard work in one of the recesses of the lower corridor of the capitol. "I came out," said he, "that there will be mighty claims legislation between now and March 4. The policy is to keep that kind of expenditure down. The United States is the poorest paymaster in the world. It has come to the stage that it is almost impossible to advocate the payment of the government's just debts, and all the more as those debts grow older and older. The fact that some of the original claimants have been forced through poverty to sell out to speculators does not affect the equities of the case in the least."

Mr. Cooper has advocated strongly the reference of claims for churches and kindred institutions to the quartermaster general's department for farther investigation and report, but he says that he has little hope of succeeding with his bill this year. "The amount required to liquidate these claims, or so many of them as are just claims, would be a large sum," he added. "It is one of the regulations of warfare the world over that these institutions shall be exempt from the ravages of war. The claims were passed over by the senate, and it is thought there was doubt about the loyalty of the worshippers in these churches. But it is well established by law that a corporation, especially a church corporation, can not be disloyal to the government."

"I think sometimes that the time has come for a second Henry Clay to preach

internal improvements on a grand scale," remarked Representative Acheson of Washington. "The big lynchpin of the nation is the harbor and harbor committee, and in common with the other members, has been struggling for the amount of improvements to waterways into bill that shall carry a minimum of government appropriations. The army engineers have recommended projects that will cost \$200,000,000, and we have to frame a bill that will carry only a fractional part of that amount. Every project recommended is probably worthy of the entire expenditure estimated, but the money could not be appropriated without bankrupting the treasury."

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